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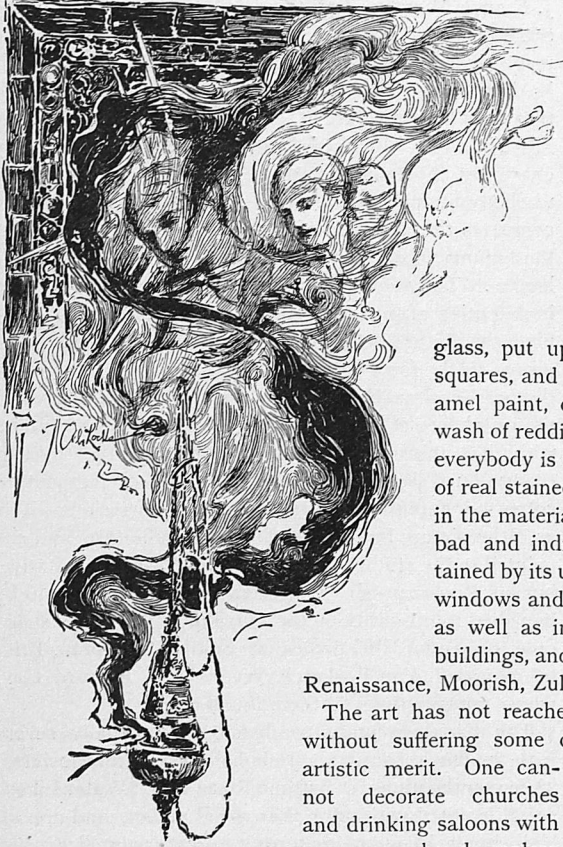
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# DECORATION & FURNITURE

## THE USE OF STAINED GLASS.



OME few years ago it would have been necessary, even in writing for an art magazine, to point out that by stained glass we do not mean primarily or mainly painted glass. At that time what was called stained glass was to be seen only in a few churches, and was, most of it, ordinary

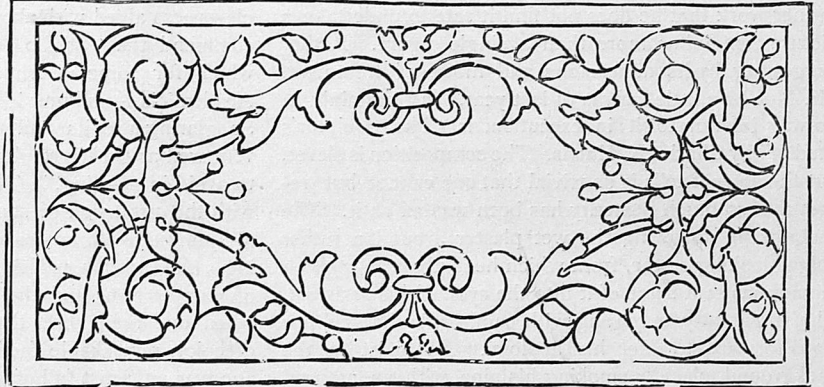
glass, put up in lozenges instead of in squares, and covered with patterns in enamel paint, or sometimes merely with a wash of reddish brown water-color. Now, everybody is familiar with the appearance of real stained glass, which holds its color in the material, and with the effects, good, bad and indifferent, which may be obtained by its use. It is to be seen in doors, windows and skylights of private houses, as well as in churches and other public buildings, and in every variety of design—Renaissance, Moorish, Zulu and Chinese.

The art has not reached this degree of popularity without suffering some corresponding loss of true artistic merit. One cannot decorate churches and drinking saloons with an even hand unless he steadily does his worst,

and an art that is called into use on all occasions is sure to suffer from some of them. Stained glass is especially liable to vulgar abuse, and, no doubt, there is hardly one of our readers but can bring to mind some example which he very properly regards as worse than anything that he has seen in chromo-lithography or cheap carpets. But the strength and brilliancy of color which betrays the incapable designer offers the very finest field for one who is really strong. That in spite of the process of vulgarization which has been going on in the art during the last three or four years, excellent work is still being done, is proof that very considerable powers of design are engaged in it. But for this, even the great beauty of the material, and the variety of uses to which it may be put, would hardly have kept it from falling quickly into desuetude. Indeed, the variety and adaptability of American stained glass, which qualities mainly distinguish it from European, only serve with incapable designers to give them opportunities to go wrong, which they would not have in the case of a material of a less tractable character.

If the art of making stained glass windows should ever become reduced to the status of a manufacture, the fact would be the more deplorable, because, as now practised with us, we can claim it as a native art. While English, French and German glass-stainers are even now trying in vain, with their perfected modern skill and with chemically pure though cheap ingredients, to attain the deep rich tone which in their ancient cathedral windows is due greatly to the imperfections of the glass, made often from the most costly material,\* some one in this country, observing that the melted glass could easily be variegated to any extent, set about making use of such glass instead of attempting to secure tone and uniformity of color at once, as in mediæval windows. There is a controversy as to who the individual was and as to whether he did not derive the idea from seeing chance (or choice?) pieces of English glass of the sort, or, finally, whether the notion was not taken from some of those little Chinese snuff-bottles, many of which are most perfect specimens of imitation in glass, of jasper, agate and other precious stones. However this may be, and although the material was not invented here, the use of what has come to be known as American stained glass is, as yet, almost confined to this country, and there has been developed in connection with it an art which is practically new in all its

aspects, an art in which painting may be almost or quite dispensed with, in which the texture and changing colors of foliage, sky and draperies may be imitated with the happiest results, and which, with the help of moulded or faceted glass, affords richer and most brilliant effects in conventional compositions.



The fitness of our productions for use in private dwellings, in which European stained glass can hardly be used in any quantity, is what is, perhaps, most remarkable about them. In city houses, more especially, stained glass is driving the ugly plate-glass window out of existence. In a situation where there

is, most of the time, nothing to be seen but bricks and mortar, or still uglier brown stone, something is necessary to break up and color the entering light, to satisfy the eye with a beautiful pattern or picture; and it is indispensable that it be either rich and deep for a large ball-room or hall, or delicately tinted for use in smaller rooms or where a strongly colored light would be inappropriate. Nothing else will answer all these requirements half so well as stained-glass windows or screens which may (and should) be specially designed to suit each particular case.

The first thing that strikes one on entering a modern house in any of our cities is the vestibule door-light, which now gleams with jewelled and colored glass, where formerly was a sheet of ground or etched glass only. Stained glass is nowhere more appropriate than here; but it must be admitted that the majority of the designs that one sees here are wholly unsuited to their place. The abominable patchwork which has been intro-



FIG. 1. STAINED-GLASS VESTIBULE LIGHT.



FIG. 2. STAINED-GLASS WINDOW-BORDER.

duced into every sort of art manufacture, and which the upholsterer dubs the Japanese style, is too often put into stained glass for vestibule doors. Shepherdesses, knights in armor, pollywogs, salamanders, and other things bearing relation but to the follies of the inhabitants, shine out at night from these portals, and in the most vivid colors. A vestibule door-light should be wholly conventional in design and should be symmetrical or very carefully balanced. If one belongs to a family which, in Europe, is entitled

\* The thirteenth century blue glass was made from fragments of old Roman and Greek glass, priced as high as sapphires, and often sold as such.



to heraldic distinction, one may, not too conspicuously, use crest or coat-of-arms to ornament his door-light. But, as a rule, it is better to use some elegant classical or early Renaissance design like that of Dr. White's house at Sixty-sixth Street and Fifth Avenue, or that of Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt's house (Fig. 1) or of Mr. D. O. Mills' house, or that in the accompanying illustration by Tidden & Arnold (Fig. 2). In all of these the ground is of a slightly tinted but not quite transparent glass, into which the colored arabesques or the symmetrically disposed leaves and branches of the design are leaded. This allows plenty of nearly colorless light to enter the hall in the daytime, and at night the design, which every passer-by can see, appears nowise bizarre or meretricious.

In most new houses all the doors on the ground floor have glazed panels, and the windows have transom lights of stained glass. A freer and more pictorial style is often advisable in these. When the staircase is lit by windows, these offer one of his best opportunities to the glass-worker. These windows can usually be seen from several points of view, and at a sufficient distance to take in the whole of the composition at a glance. They are almost always treated pictorially; frequently the composition runs across several lights, as in the windows of the W. H. Vanderbilt house, where the subject is an allegory of Peace and Commerce; or, as in the stair-windows of a noted Philadelphia house, designed by the artist who illustrates this article, in which a mass of autumn vines is carried from window to window, and between them one sees blue sky and clouds, and birds flying or perching on the branches. In this last suite of windows the opalescent or variegated glass stands for a good deal; for by means of it what painters understand by the "quality" of color of the objects represented, as well as their accidental markings, and the appearance of atmosphere necessary to a successful picture, are gained in a very remarkable manner. But the staircase is often lit only by a skylight, which, being invisible from the first floor should not be of an expensive pictorial design. A simple arrangement of rondels, circular cast

pieces of glass, generally greenish or olive in color, with the spaces between filled with another tint, or some other simple geometric arrangement, should suffice. It is nonsense putting very expensive work into a skylight except when it takes the

place of what might be a handsome painted ceiling. When there are no staircase windows, those of the largest room on the ground floor, living-room, music-room or dining-room, are made the most important, and are commonly filled with figure

subjects. Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt's ball-room windows, made in France, and representing the Field of the Cloth of Gold, will come to everybody's mind. The Renaissance border of the window shown in the sketch (Fig. 2) is one of two for a room of about the same size. Figures are very often used in dining-room windows, and, if the room is large enough, there can be no better place for them. Greek and Roman mythology furnishes plenty of subjects, as Ceres, Pomona and Bacchus. But fruits and flowers, as in the dining-room of the Union League Club, or still-life compositions, like the clever ones in the Casino at Newport, may be preferred. There is a tendency in this, as in every matter connected with the dining-room, to use dark and heavy colors. It should be discountenanced. Dark and "rich" dining-rooms are fit only for a nation of gluttons.

If the dining-room windows should not be too dark in color, still less should those of the library shut out the light.

A very good plan here is to use the family arms—or, they failing, an enlargement of the owner's book-plate design—for a central spot of color in the window; the rest to be filled up with a geometrical pattern of colorless glass. Heraldic bearings are

more in place in a library than anywhere else, being connected with ancient history. The illustration (Fig. 4) shows one way of inserting them. Another, and perhaps a cheaper, way is to inscribe the arms in a lozenge or oval or other plain figure, and let that break the pattern of which the window is composed. Still, the manner shown in the cut has much the prettier effect. In a certain private library in New York the window is so treated, but with, instead of the arms, a copy of an old Venetian printer's mark, and with a trail of ivy instead of the conventional heraldic foliage.

Neither in the conservatory nor in the picture-gallery is it customary to use stained glass, but leaded transparent glass is commonly used in

both. When a person does not need to mind the expense, plate glass ground to a shape, with polished bevelled edges, will be found, when the several pieces are leaded together in a pattern, to have a very agreeable effect.



FIG. 3. STAINED-GLASS MEMORIAL CHURCH WINDOW.

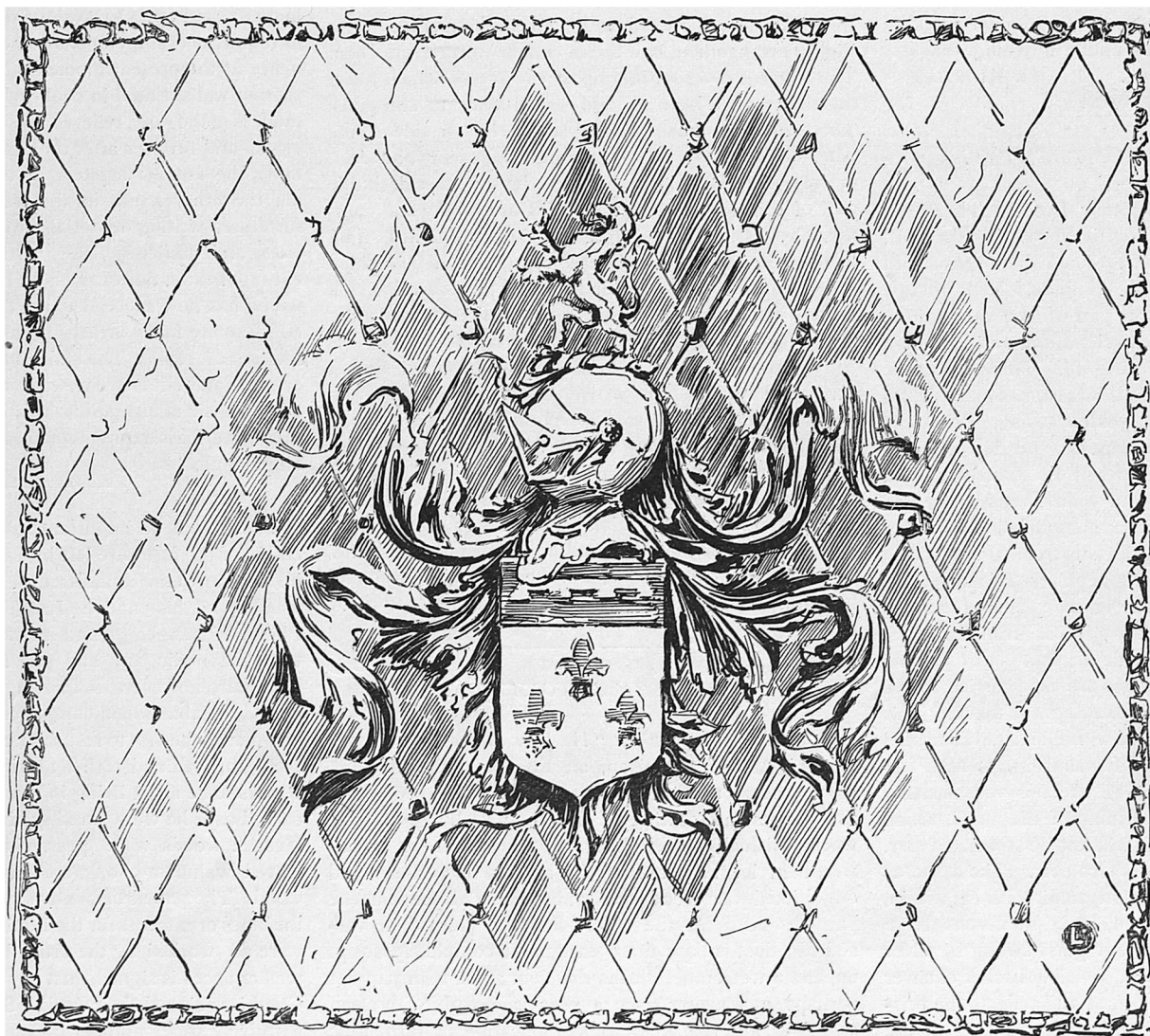


FIG. 4. STAINED-GLASS LIBRARY WINDOW OF HERALDIC DESIGN.

So far, we have spoken of stained glass in private houses only; but, as everybody is aware, it has already been extensively used in all sorts of public buildings in this country. Perhaps the best known examples are the La Farge windows in Trinity Church, Boston, and in the Harvard Memorial Hall at Cambridge, Mass. These have been often described; but little mention has been made of a much smaller, but very curious little window, by La Farge, in the Public Library of Quincy, in the same State. This, which shows a figure of a philosopher, copied, as is Mr. La Farge's wont, from a tortuous old Byzantine bas-relief, is most gorgeous in color; and, there being no lead-lines, but, instead, a very fine fillet of copper which is entirely lost at a little distance, the effect is that of a genuine translucent painting, like that of enamel, but more brilliant, as the light is transmitted, not reflected. It remains to be seen whether the process would work well on a large scale; but, in this case (the figure is not more than three feet high), its success is absolute. The largest and most important work in stained glass in any public place in New York City, excepting the windows of Trinity Church, which are not of American make, is the skylight of the new Produce Exchange. But that, being purely conventional in design, does not call for detailed description. Church windows are in most cases memorial windows, and it is generally desirable to introduce a portrait of the person in whose memory they are erected. Few have been so successful in this sort of design as Mr. Locke, whose window, of which is given a reproduction of his sketch, is one of the handsomest, as well as one of the cheapest windows of its kind. Such windows (Fig. 3) as a rule, are very costly, and, on account of the difficulty of conveying at once a general religious sentiment, and a personal one, very unsatisfactory. Perhaps it may be said that the greater part of all our work in stained glass is unsatisfactory—we know that much of it is unbearable by cultivated persons. But so it is with every art which is in great demand. We may console ourselves with the reflection that foreigners, like Seymour Haden, who saw all that there was to be seen of it, both good and bad; and others, like the Munich artists, who saw only a few pieces, at their Exposition, unite in praising American stained glass in the highest terms, as equal, on the whole, in artistic merit, to older work of the best periods, while totally unlike anything that has before been done or attempted. ROGER RIORDAN.

#### THE NEW LYCEUM THEATRE.

THE general scheme of the new Lyceum Theatre is Oriental both in color and decorative forms, but the word must be taken in a wide sense. The color begins with old oak lavishly used in the vestibule. Reds mingle with its browns in the lower part of the auditorium. The side walls are covered with rich satin, antique red in hue and traversed by deep frets in gold. This same fabric covers the balcony. Above, yellow assumes more prominence. The side walls are golden toned. Below the frieze silver ornamentation appears, and the ceiling—lighter yellow in tint—is covered with decorative forms in silver. But this color scheme in yellow reds rising into yellow, with high lights of silver, is modified throughout by the wood which, avowing its constructive use, is also made ornamental. This is seen in pillars and supporting panels, but most conspicuously in the beams of the ceiling. They are carried back lengthwise from the space which surrounds the square dome, and short parallel beams are inserted between, and are also carried above the frieze on the ceiling surrounding the dome. This wood everywhere is ornamented with fine detail stencilled on in silver, having the look of metal inlays seen frequently in Japanese work. The effect is very pleasing at present; but, with the tarnishing of the metal, which must come in a little while, it will not be so satisfactory.

The lighting of the theatre is also new. The dome, as has been said, is square. From arching beams within, treated as has been described, hang numerous large pear-shaped globes of opalescent glass swung by silver wires and inclosed in an almost invisible basket of silver wire. Each holds an electric light and reflects the prismatic tints. Elsewhere, as against the capitals of the pillars, hang electric lights against panels of stained glass. Behind is a silver lining which reflects their colors; for American glass is intended for reflection as well as for translucence. The decorative value of the lighting is chiefly seen in the side lights and balcony. At intervals on the balcony are concave panels of opalescent glass

screening an electric light. These branch in colors with perforations showing the red silk beneath. In the side walls, when the house is darkened, panels of stained glass shut out the light, and on wall and balcony are seen in the darkness glowing spots of color. The light is well diffused, coming from behind the spectator, instead of in front of him, except in the centre light in the roof which he is not supposed to look at. The globes, suspended from overhead, on account of their shape, have the unpleasant suggestion of bladders; and if one succeeds in overcoming that fancy, they suggest the triviality of ornamented ostrich eggs.

The stage framing is very original. There are two curtains, each spanning the stage, which are in stripes of green and gold, woven very light, and deepening at the sides until dark blues are admitted. A decorative band crosses the bottom of each, in paint and embroidery, which rises and deepens on the deeper toned sides of the curtains. The drapery hides the proscenium, instead of, as in the ordinary theatre, being inside the frame; the idea, as Mr. Mackaye, the manager, explained to the writer, being, that both frame and picture are equally concealed, as in a painting they would be to one at the threshold of an art gallery. As the curtains are gathered back, the orchestral car descends. Behind pillars, the lines of which are taken from an opium pipe and their bases richly incrustated with silvered modelling in relief, sits the orchestra. Above, is a frieze of stained glass and swinging garlands of roses modelled in glass. Behind is a cartouche bearing Longfellow's lines:

And the night shall be filled with music,  
And the cares that infest the day  
Shall fold up their tents like Arabs,  
And silently steal away.

The music over, the car rises, the curtains descend, and, passing one another, reverse the decoration which appears on the other side, always making new lines and combinations. The frieze of the proscenium is a conventional arrangement of butterflies in green and yellow. When the orchestral car is up, it makes with the stage a deep cove overlaid with gold, the only gold used in the decoration. When the car descends, the cove is concealed behind a band of stencilled ornament. The boxes are inclosed by screens of finely turned wood spindles and are roofed with tent-like draperies. By a sliding arrangement two boxes can be turned into one. The wooden disks on the top of the screen which assist this movement, bear an odd resemblance to sun-dials. There are two boxes and a stall on each side of the balcony. There is no gallery, and the balcony, at least, in the front rows, is designed to be the most desirable part of the house. All the chairs are roomy and comfortable. They can be turned up in convenient fashion to allow free passage to late comers, or can be divided into groups of two, three and four, to be reserved like a private box, and they are not of the comic, surprise order in use for a while at the Union Square Theatre.

To sum up, it must be said that the inventive skill of Mr. Mackaye, and the artistic knowledge of Messrs. Louis C. Tiffany & Co., the decorators, have given the New York public a very attractive house of entertainment. Architecturally considered, the interior is devoid of dignity in construction—there is too much pettiness of detail—too much "invention"—too much "talent" altogether. But the theatre is well built for sight and sound, is remarkably comfortable, and the coloring presents an harmonious ensemble of which one is not likely to tire.

#### HEALTHY DECORATION.

IN a recent lecture on "Healthy Decoration in the Home," Mr. G. Aitchison, an English architect, said, among other things: Nothing is better for preventing the permanent location of dirt than really good hard wood polished parquet; but if that be found too expensive, then let the joints of the boards be well scraped out, filleted with wood when wide, and let all the joints be puttied. And let the whole floor be painted or varnished; dust is then more easily and completely swept up, and a wet flannel cleans the floor; but with parquet perhaps a washing once a year is enough with clean sweeping, and the wholesome application of turpentine and beeswax.

Next to polished wood, tiles, marble, glass and marble mosaics, the best wall finish is oil paint, which can be made agreeable to the eye by simple flat tints of harmonious color, or it can be ornamented with floral or arabesque ornament, or with the highest triumphs of

the painter's art, and this last will not only mark the owner's real taste for art, but will prevent the accumulation of dust on the picture frames. Flock papers should never be used, except when they are painted over, as they form a natural receptacle for dust, and seem to absorb the greatest quantity of foulness from the air, and when the flock is not dyed "in-grain" whenever they are touched some of the coloring matter comes off and is mixed with the air of the room. Mr. Aitchison was greatly inclined to recommend the varnishing of all papers, so that they could be cleaned with a sponge; but it was absolutely essential to varnish them in nurseries. Children will lick the papers, and neither lead, copper, nor arsenic can be good for them, and neither size nor whiting are substances you would give to children without medical advice.

Beauty of form and color have a very important effect upon our health. All of us can bear witness to the dullness of a room of one color, in which we have to sit when we are without occupation, and the desire we then have for some beautiful and intricate pattern to relieve its monotony. When a room is adorned with pictures we have not merely occupation, but delight, and those higher emotions that are only excited by the fine arts. When we choose wall-papers, those that are more beautiful in form and color are to be preferred. We should, however, satisfy ourselves that the patterns on the papers with which our rooms are hung have not a look of motion. Nothing is more distressing than to be in a room where the pattern of the paper seems always crawling like a bag of worms. It would be well if we could have all things about us beautiful in form, elegantly simple, and all the colors harmonious and restrained; these great qualities seem to impart to us the feelings of self-restraint, dignity and repose.

THE Parisians are returning to simplicity in interior decoration, and their cabinet-makers are even beginning to reproduce the neo-Greek furniture of the Directory and the First Empire. The reign of plush, which has been so lavishly used of late years for wall-hangings, picture frames, photograph frame, and for all kinds of upholstery work, is at an end, and the house-decorators are no longer called upon to rival the dressmakers and milliners in the art of crumpling stuffs and draping folds. The tendency at the present moment is to return to simple wainscotted walls, tinted in cool gray, and the furniture à la mode is mahogany, relieved with simple brass bands, and clocks and bronzes after the designs of Percier and Fontaine, the famous masters of the time of Napoleon I. On the other hand, in the way of knick-knacks, table furniture, writing materials, toilet necessities, leather work and stationery, the "article de Paris" has been entirely beaten out of the field by the "article Anglais," which has now succeeded the florid and over-ornamented Viennese fancy articles brought into vogue by the exhibition of 1878. The shops of Paris are full of English articles, and either from want of invention, or because they despair of struggling against the fashion of the moment, the Parisian manufacturers are all imitating the English models. T. C.

THERE was an important sale at the Hôtel Drouot recently of the furniture left by Sauvresy, whose name will be familiar to the connoisseur. This artistic Frenchman went from his native Laon, to Paris, when Louis Philippe was king, and manufactured the solid but unstylish mahogany and gilt furniture then in vogue. Gradually, however, after having studied, travelled and reflected, he abandoned completely the ideas of his day and was one of the first to resuscitate the forms and designs of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. He was veritably a Renaissance artist living in modern times, an artist who carved as if he were chasing the precious metals. His favorite woods were pear, either natural or ebonized, waxed walnut, and oak, and, for his carved panels, box-wood. The panels of box-wood, or of bronze bas-reliefs, the brass ornaments for the Louis XV. and XVI. furniture were all worked by the artist himself, and each of his masterpieces is signed, just as Riesener, Roentgen and Gouthière signed their work. Sauvresy produced a comparatively small number of pieces, which were bought by amateurs. He was entirely devoted to his art and did not become rich. The highest price paid at his sale was \$1190, for a little jewel coffer in natural pear-wood and box-wood. It has three compartments superposed and enriched with figures and bas-reliefs of exquisitely fine workmanship. T. C.